

We claim:

1. A system for managing a business organization's customer-related communications, comprising:

at least one originator terminal for receiving from an originator a submission  
5 containing a submission category, customer information, and an identified business issue;  
a central server computer connected to the originator terminal for storing the submission in a database accessible by the central server computer, for assigning an owner to the submission based upon the submission category, customer information, and identified business issue, and for automatically notifying the owner of the assignment;  
10 at least one owner terminal connected to the central server computer for providing access to the submission stored in the database, and for documenting a response to the submission by updating the submission.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the system further includes:

at least one FYI assigner terminal connected to the central server computer for  
15 providing access to the submission stored in the database to an FYI assigner automatically designated by the central server computer based on the submission category, customer information, and identified business issue, and for documenting a response to the submission by updating the submission.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the central server computer further  
20 includes:

a customer complaint resolution process software module run by the central server computer for handling a response to a submission containing a customer complaint.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the system exports data to a quality management software module run by the central server computer for generating reports based upon submissions stored in the database.

5. The system of claim 1, further including a website administered by the central server computer for receiving a submission from an originator terminal, and for receiving a submission update from an owner terminal.

6. The system of claim 1, further including a customer terminal connected to the central server computer for receiving a submission directly from a customer.

7. A system for managing a business organization's customer-related communications, comprising:

a website administered by a central server computer;

at least one originator terminal connected to the central server computer;

at least one owner terminal connected to the central server computer; and

a database accessible by the central server computer,

the website including an add submission web page displayed at an originator terminal for receiving a submission containing customer-related information, the submission including a designated category selected from a set of categories including response-required submissions, FYI submissions, and customer complaint submissions,

the central server computer automatically storing the submission in the database,

the website further including an update submission web page that is displayed at an owner terminal for updating a submission stored in the central database to document a response to a submission.

8. The system of claim 7, further including a web page for searching submissions stored in the database and displaying search results.

9. The system of claim 7, further including an external customer submission web page that is displayed at an external customer terminal, the external customer submission web page being used by an external customer to make a submission directly into the system.

10. A method for managing a business organization's customer-related communications, comprising:

(a) using a central server computer to administer a network;

(b) receiving at an originator terminal connected into the network a submission containing customer-related information, the submission including a designation of a category of the submission, the designated category being selected from a set of categories including response required submissions, a response required submission including an assignment of the submission to an owner,

(c) transmitting a response-required submission to the central server computer;

(d) storing the response-required submission in a database accessible by the central server computer;

(e) automatically notifying the assigned owner of the response required submission;

(f) developing a response to the response-required submission;

(g) documenting the response to the response-required submission by using an owner terminal connected to the central server computer to access and update the response-required submission; and

(h) storing the updated response-required submission in the database.

5           11. The method of claim 10, wherein step (e) includes providing the owner with a workflow queue of requests to be worked on by the owner.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein the set of categories includes FYI submissions, an FYI submission including a designation of an assigner, and wherein the method further includes:

10           receiving an FYI submission at the originator terminal;  
              storing the FYI submission in the database;  
              automatically notifying the designated assigner of the FYI submission;  
              documenting a response to the FYI submission by using the owner terminal to access and update the FYI submission;

15           storing the updated FYI submission the database.

13. The method of claim 10, wherein the set of categories includes customer complaint submissions, and wherein the method further includes:

              automatically invoking a customer complaint resolution process to handles the customer complaint.

20           14. The method of claim 10, further including:

              generating quality management reports based upon submissions stored in the database.

15. The method of claim 10, wherein step (a) includes using the central server computer to administer a website, and wherein steps (b) and (g) include gaining access to the website.

16. The method of claim 10, further including:

5 receiving an external customer submission directly from an external customer terminal connected to the central server computer;

automatically storing the external customer submission in the database; and  
notifying a VOC owner of the submission.

17. The method of claim 16, further including:

10 automatically sending a response to the customer by e-mail after the VOC owner has developed a response and entered it into the system.

18. A method for managing a business organization's customer-related communications, comprising:

(a) administering a website from a central server computer;

15 (b) displaying an add submission web page at an originator terminal connected to the center server computer;

(c) receiving at the add submission web page a submission containing customer-related information, the submission including a designated category selected from a set of categories including response-required submissions, FYI submissions, and  
20 customer complaint submissions,

(d) automatically storing the submission in the database,

(e) displaying an update submission web page at an owner terminal connected to the central server computer;

(f) documenting a response to a submission by using the update submission web page to access and update a submission stored in the database; and

(g) storing the updated submissions in the database.

18. The method of claim 17, further including:

5 displaying at a terminal connected to the central server computer a search submissions web page for search submissions stored in the database and displaying search results.

19. The method of claim 17, further including:

10 displaying an external customer submission web page at an external customer terminal connected to the central server computer;  
using the external customer submission web page to receive a submission directly from a customer.